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NSC BRIEFING

7 December 1960

CONGO

- I. Immediate question in Congo is whether Lumumba supporters in Orientale Province can obtain sufficient foreign aid to make good their "secession."
  - A. Mobutu's threat to move Congo Army against Orientale poses threat of civil war.
- II. Pro-Lumumba official has indicated to Embassy Leopoldville that proclamation of independent Orientale Province had been decided even prior to Lumumba's capture 2 December.
  - A. However, Lumumbist position appears vulnerable in absence of a leader with Lumumba's rabble-rousing capacity. In addition, they face serious problem in gaining outside material aid.
    1. Although at least two emissaries have sought Soviet bloc aid in past two months, geography likely to preclude any large-scale supply effort.

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- III. Recent Mobutu actions, however, likely to increase international pressures for political solution of Congo crisis which will give some status to Lumumba forces.

State Department review completed

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- A. Rough treatment of Lumumba after arrest, together with Mobutu's indefinite extension of his interim government beyond 31 December, made bad impression.
1. The USSR immediately responded to Lumumba's capture with official statement on 3 December calling for UN protection of deposed premier. Another government statement on 5 December demanded in scathing terms that Lumumba be released and restored to authority and that Mobutu's forces be disarmed.
- B. UN faced with problem of possible large-scale Afro-Asian defections from UN force. Ceylon announced on 7 December the withdrawal of its token mission, and UAR expected momentarily to announce withdrawal its 500-man battalion.
1. Nasir believed to have communicated with Afro-Asian nations regarding Congo. Other nations, including Ghana and Guinea, may withdraw from UN force.
- C. Hammarskjold likely to step up pressure for a roundtable political conference of Congo parties or for reconvening of parliament. Either one could be first step towards "regularization" of Congo government.
1. Once first flush of his victory past Mobutu may be willing discuss such alternatives.
- . Situation in Katanga poses problems on both diplomatic and military fronts.
- A. Neither Tshombé nor Kasavubu have made moves necessary to reach agreement on a Congo confederation.

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1. Tshombé's current trip to Brussels--reportedly the first move in a campaign to obtain diplomatic recognition wherever possible--not likely enhance his prestige in Africa or elsewhere.
- B. In northern Katanga, depredations by anti-Tshombé Baluba tribesmen show no sign of letup. UN officials Elisabethville fear that stepped-up UN operation required if order to be restored.

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